



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information
Press Service



WASHINGTON, D. C.

Release - Immediate

October 30, 1935.

TWO MORE "SAFETY ISLANDS"
FOR DUCKS IN NORTH DAKOTA

Two new wildlife sanctuaries in North Dakota have been added to the chain of refuges being established in the Mississippi Flyway by the Biological Survey. Designated Des Lacs Migratory Waterfowl Refuge and Arrow-wood (Editors: hyphen is correct, not Arrowwood) Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, the new sanctuaries were established by recent Executive orders as a part of the national program of waterfowl restoration. Both refuges are being improved by CCC workers.

Des Lacs To Help Diving Ducks

Comprising 24,100 acres in Burke and Ward Counties, in the northwestern part of this State, the Des Lacs Refuge less than 10 miles east of Bowbells, stretches from north to south through 30 miles of nesting region that, despite the recent drought and costly drainage, still remains a productive goose and duck breeding area. It is particularly important as a nesting area and resting place for the intensively hunted diving ducks.

Of the entire acreage included in the refuge, only about 15 percent ever has been under agricultural production, and in the last four years of drought, attempts to raise crops on even this small area have failed. Now, however, the Survey will include the impoundment, control, and distribution of flood waters in its work of restoring wildlife resources. The physical development of the area will entail the construction of a series of 8 combination earth-fill and rubble concrete masonry dams and spillways, with control gates in each dam, so that flood

waters can be conserved.

A CCC camp is established on the refuge, and the workers are planting food and cover plants; impounding and diverting water; establishing truck, horse, and foot trails; sloping banks; excavating channels and ditches; reducing fire hazards; controlling rodents; constructing and repairing small buildings; and posting, and fencing the boundaries.

Bureau officials estimate that in the contract work connected with the development of this project, \$33,000 will be expended for materials, and that the labor will approximate 112,000 man hours with the resultant outlay of \$56,000.

Arrow-wood Development Includes Flood Control

The Arrow-wood Migratory Waterfowl Refuge includes 16,876 acres in the central part of North Dakota, about 25 miles north of Jamestown, in Foster and Stutsman Counties. Though broadening at intervals into a relatively flat plains area, the refuge for the most part lies in a narrow valley that rises rather abruptly to a prairielike expanse on each side. A chain of three good-sized lakes--Arrow-wood, Jim, and Mud Lakes--covers a large part of the entire refuge area. Arrow-wood Lake, in the northern part of the unit, has a land and water surface of 9,520 acres. Jim Lake, in the southern part, has a land and water surface of 3,200 acres. Mud Lake is, in fact, a marsh of 2,910 acres between the two larger lakes. The water, which is a part of the James River drainage, flows in a southerly direction.

The Arrow-wood Refuge also is in a section that at one time produced untold numbers of waterfowl that traversed the Mississippi Flyway in their spring and fall migrations. The refuge still offers annual nesting and resting attractions to large concentrations of ducks, largely canvasbacks, redheads, mallards, and pintails. Canada geese, swans, and white pelicans also inhabit the area.

The Survey plans to remove lands within the refuge from unprofitable agricultural production and to impound the flood waters that pass through the area in spring. To accomplish this, dams and dikes, with control gates and spillways, are being constructed at strategic points. Water so caught and held will be seasonably distributed to create favorable conditions for aquatic-plant production and the growth of nesting cover.

Construction work under contracts let after competitive bidding consists of the building of the dikes, dams, water-control structures and a group of headquarters buildings for the refuge. A CCC camp is developing a public recreational area on Arrow-wood Lake, constructing truck trails, building boundary fences, putting up telephone lines, and attending to erosion control, lake and stream bank protection, fire hazard reduction, and wildlife food and cover planting. An intensive program of tree planting is also contemplated for the refuge, and a public demonstration area has been planned.

In addition to creating an ideal nesting condition for waterfowl, this development will also provide for control of flood waters of the James River.